

MINUTES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
July 12, 2021
City Council Chambers

The Special Meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Woodstock was called to order by Chair Donovan Day at 7:00 PM on Monday, July 12, 2021.

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL:

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Marti Dejon, Tom Ellinghausen, Erica Wilson and Chair Donovan Day.

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Jennifer Wegmann-Gabb.

Motion made by T. Ellinghausen, second by M. Dejon, to allow Jennifer Wegmann-Gabb to join this meeting telephonically. Ayes: M. Dejon, T. Ellinghausen, E. Wilson and Chair D. Day. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: J. Wegmann-Gabb. Motion carried.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Marti Dejon, Tom Ellinghausen, Erica Wilson and Chair Donovan Day.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT TELEPHONICALLY: Jennifer Wegmann-Gabb

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: none.

STAFF PRESENT: City Planner Darrell Moore, Executive Assistant/ Chief Deputy City Clerk Jane Howie, Garrett Anderson and City Receptionist Michelle Mallon Jenkins.

OTHERS PRESENT: Jakes Dioguardi, John Green and Mr. Larry Lough, The Woodstock Independent.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:

Motion made by T. Ellinghausen, second by E. Wilson, to accept the June 14, 2021 Minutes. Ayes: M. Dejon, T. Ellinghausen, J. Wegmann-Gabb, E. Wilson and Chair D. Day. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: none. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT: none.

NEW BUSINESS

a. 220 North Benton Street – Certificate of Appropriateness for façade improvements
Mr. Dioguardi said the paint has been cleaned off of the west wall. He plans to redesign and add a new facade along with replacing windows on the west side. D. Day thanked Mr. Dioguardi for his efforts thus far. It was noted that the board and bat siding was already removed and they're looking at the bump-out and cedar shake roof. Mr. Dioguardi said they are taking their model from the facade of Read Between the Lynes. They will be reusing existing framing and windows; the roof will slope toward the north. In response to questions from Commissioners, it was noted that the large panels will be glass and they will use treated lumber. They believe the treated lumber will help to avoid rot.

There was a bit of discussion about historic photos and the look of the building originally. Mr. Dioguardi said the vestibule came in after the fact. He explained the current use of the vestibule and the issues it would cause if removed. E. Wilson said the façade looks very nice; her concern is that it's copying other finishes. She said she'd be more interested in a unique look; its own character and colors, perhaps. Mr. Dioguardi opined they believed the City wanted the colors to match the other historic buildings on the Square that have recently been updated. Mr. Dioguardi asked if the Commission would like to see other color schemes. M. Dejon suggested they select their own colors with approval from the City.

T. Ellinghausen extended thanks to Mr. Dioguardi for his improvements thus far. Mr. Dioguardi added that they'll be doing a lot of tuckpointing and the glass block will be removed on the west side, the glass block on the south side will be covered. Mr. Dioguardi said the vent will remain, as requested by the tenant who uses the basement. The vent will be painted to match the new panels and it won't stick out as far as it does currently. Mr. Green explained the work he'll be doing to cover over the glass block on the south side. In response to a question from T. Ellinghausen, Mr. Dioguardi said he will get approval from the City to repair the brick pillar.

Motion by M. Dejon, second by E. Wilson to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for facade improvements at 220 North Benton Street with the contingency that they get the assistance from D. Moore on color choices. Ayes: M. Dejon, T. Ellinghausen, J. Wegmann-Gabb, E. Wilson and Chair D. Day. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: none. Motion carried.

Jakes Dioguardi and John Green left the meeting at 7:28 PM.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Woodstock Train Station – Certificate of Appropriateness

In response to a question from E. Wilson, D. Moore said the outermost brick had deteriorated; therefore, it needed to be replaced. D. Moore stated that the plans were reviewed by the Director of the City's Building & Zoning Department and City staff. E. Wilson asked why this review didn't come before this Commission, but instead City employees were making decisions? She asked what their qualifications are to make those decisions? D. Moore shared information about who the architectural firm was that was used. He added that initial report from the architect was that the bricks could be repaired or replaced. E. Wilson requested a copy of the Report. D. Moore said he will forward the report to Commissioners. E. Wilson said she would like to discuss this and find out how it failed to follow the Commission process. Further discussion ensued.

D. Moore said he was surprised that this historic building was handled this way. D. Day suggested having these types of projects flagged in the Building & Zoning Department so that this situation doesn't happen again. D. Moore said he received a lot of information from the current City Engineer, Chris Tiedt. He was told all the necessary approvals were obtained. E. Wilson asked how Chris Tiedt was able to make the decision to use limestone. D. Moore said the City Engineer is not trained in historic preservation; the project was approved by City Council. D. Moore said the Engineers were relying on Consultants, who should have flagged this project to be presented to this Commission. D. Moore said going forward the City has informed Consultants of their experience working on historic buildings. It was noted that this building is owned by Union Pacific and leased by the City; Metra oversees it. Metra paid for this work. E. Wilson was upset that City employees did not have this project come before the Historic Preservation Commission before going before the City Council.

D. Moore said there hasn't been a formal meeting on this topic. D. Moore said he believes this is a one in a million thing, this is not the normal way of running the department. He opined employees need to be informed about these projects so that these projects are directed to D. Moore. M. Dejon opined this is not okay. She added that it's important to lay down the line to make people aware of these buildings. J. Wegmann-Gabb agreed with the comments made.

Motion by M. Dejon, second by E. Wilson, to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the Woodstock Train Station. Ayes: none. Nays: M. Dejon, T. Ellinghausen, J. Wegmann-Gabb, E. Wilson and Chair D. Day. Abstentions: none. Absentees: none. Motion did not carry.

REPORTS AND DISCUSSION:

a. Downtown height recommendations

D. Moore did not have a new proposal. He mentioned that he created a model to include the heights of the Opera House. He explained that he needs to refine the model before bringing it to this Commission.

D. Moore said the City will select a short list for the Construction Manager RFQ for the Old Courthouse later this week. Hoping in another month's time we'll have numbers for the building costs and a timeframe. All firms are very well educated with historic properties and have worked with very notable buildings. D. Moore explained further. The Construction Manager must provide a cost that they will not exceed. The goal is to get this done as quickly as possible. D. Day asked about the private entities that are interested in the building, D. Moore said there is still much to be considered.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

M. Dejon said that we don't want the Old Courthouse and Opera House to be overshadowed in the Square. T. Ellinghausen mentioned the house on South Street that isn't in the historic district. He asked if there could be a phased historic district. M. Dejon said they had also discussed moving some boundaries of the historic district. T. Ellinghausen would like the Commission to think about what that criteria are, such as the age of the building. He added that it might be time to make some changes in preparation of what's to come in the future. J. Wegmann-Gabb opined people may also wish to know what homes / buildings are not in the district. She added that changing the buildings could be a big deal, we need to be fully aware of what we're getting ourselves into.

There was discussion about a historical significance report and a historic structures survey. There was talk about re-defining the historic district and perhaps including a 'phased structure'. Commissioners discussed some of the guidelines that might be included. D. Moore will look into this further. D. Day asked about a real estate tax break, an IL property tax freeze program. He said there could be one for commercial and one for residential.

M. Dejon asked about Ethereal Confection's proposed rooftop addition. D. Moore said that will come before this Commission when a presentation is ready. M. Dejon asked about new tenants of the Sheriff's House. D. Moore said the City hopes that the tenants will be decided upon by next week and will be presented to City Council in August.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion made by E. Wilson, second by T. Ellinghausen to adjourn this Special Meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission. Ayes: M. Dejon, T. Ellinghausen, J. Wegmann-Gabb, E. Wilson and Chair D. Day. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: none. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Howie
Chief Deputy City Clerk